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A  
COMPARATIVE VIEW  
OF THE  
L I V E S  
OF  
HENRY THE FOURTH OF FRANCE,  
AND  
WILLIAM THE THIRD OF ENGLAND.  
BEING AN  
E S S A Y,  
TO WHICH  
THE PRIZE, PROPOSED BY HIS EXCELLENCY  
THE  
LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND,  
WAS ADJUDGED, IN HILLARY TERM, 1778.

By JEROM ALLEY.

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TO HIS EXCELLENCY,  
JOHN, EARL OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE,  
LORD LIEUTENANT GENERAL,  
AND  
GENERAL GOVERNOR  
OF  
*I R E L A N D,*

THIS ESSAY IS,  
WITH THE UTMOST GRATITUDE,

INSCRIBED,

BY HIS EXCELLENCY'S

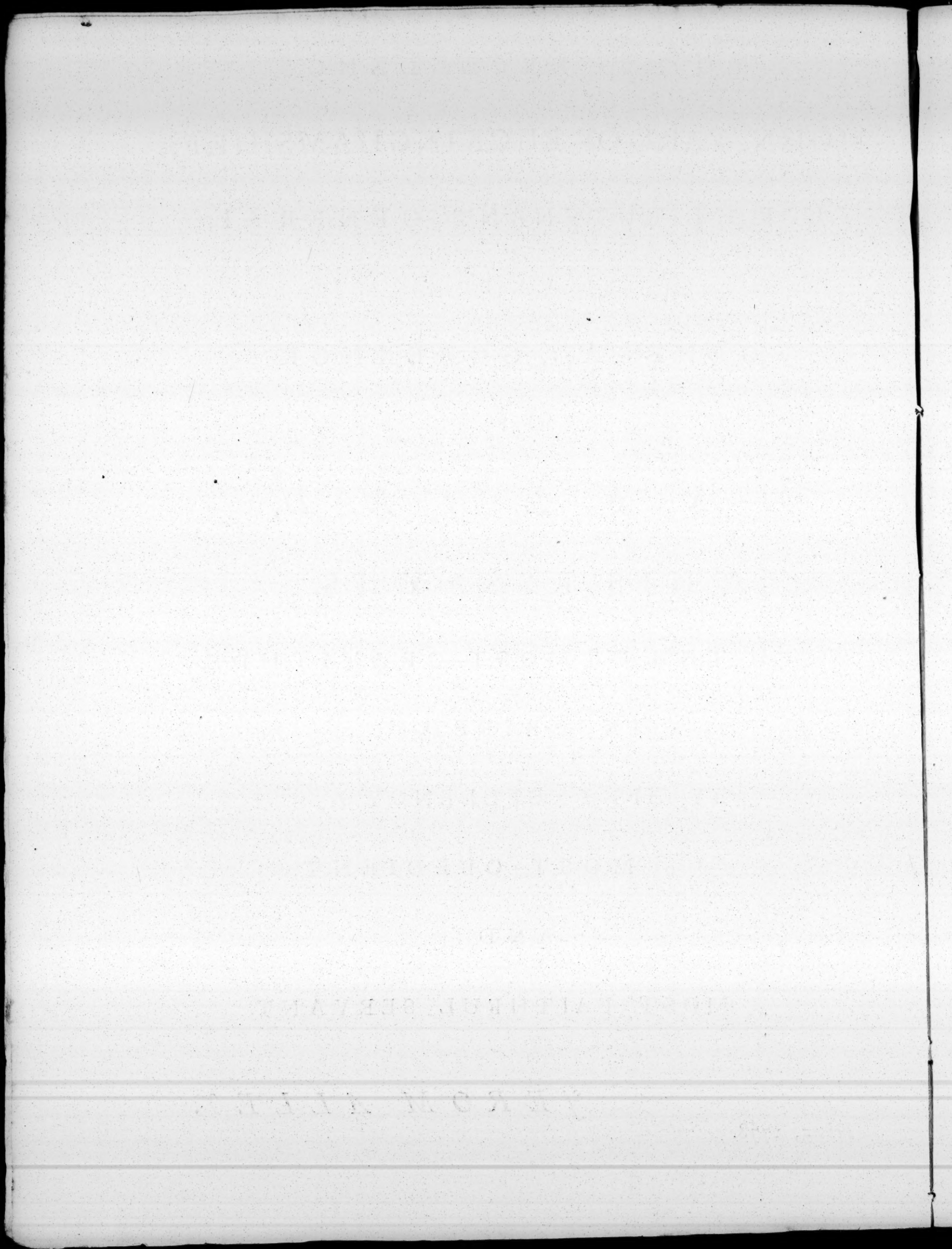
MOST OBEDIENT

AND

MOST FAITHFUL SERVANT,

*JEROM ALLEY.*

*Feb. 5, 1778.*

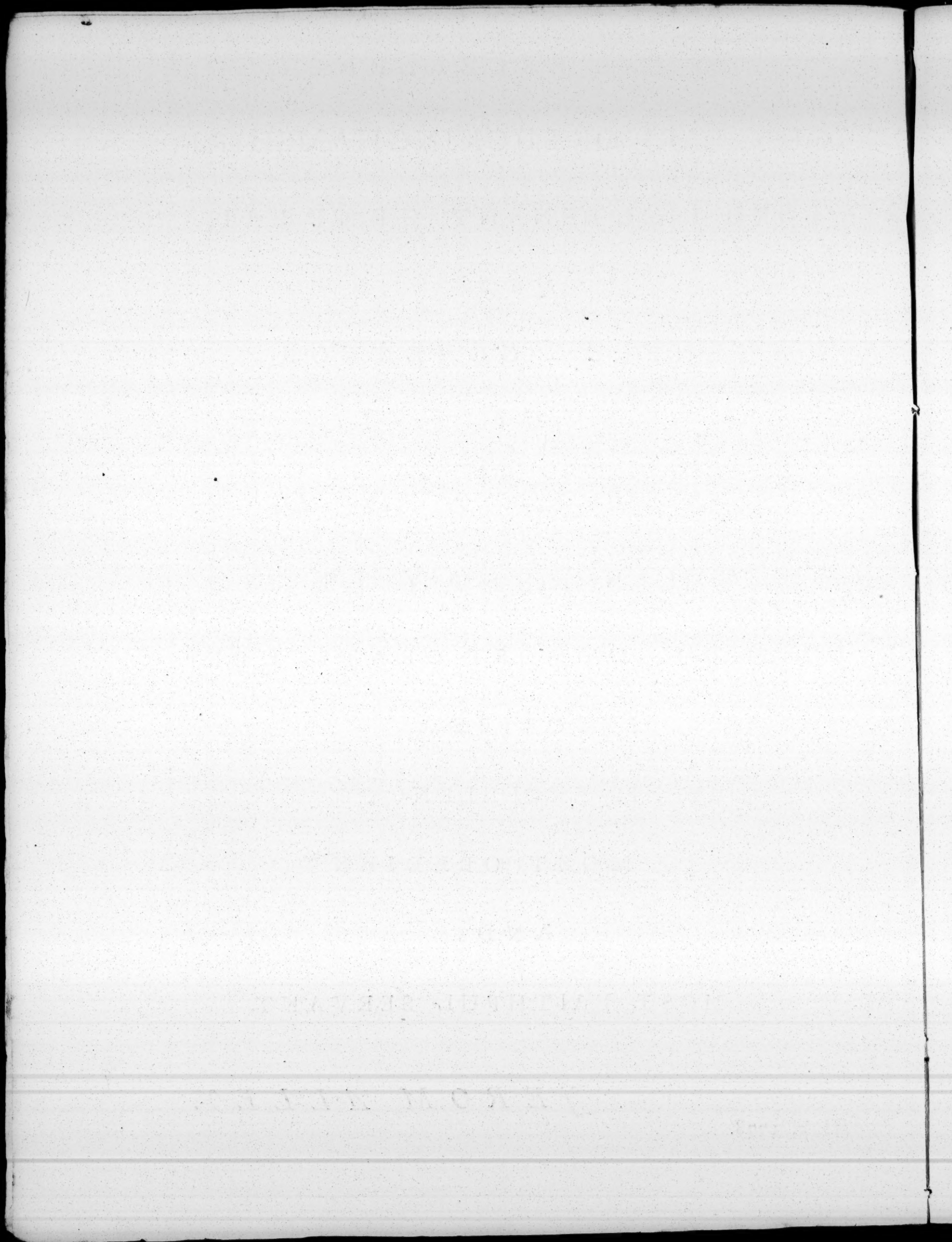




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IT has not been unfrequent, but it is certainly Introduction. improper, to oppose two characters against each other, which have scarce a resemblance in common. The true critic in history will proceed in another manner. He will act like the connoisseur, who, in arranging his pictures, attends to their intrinsic merits; and, by contrasting the works of a Titian with those of a Raphael, enhances the beauty of both, instead of decreasing the effect of either. The two great characters, which have been proposed to our consideration, are of this nature—They are like the compositions of those eminent masters—They resemble in particulars, and are, yet, essentially different—





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They may both be attended to with equally moral advantage—The one exhibits the dangerous influence of uncontrouled passions; and, the other, the happy effects of persevering virtue.

Comparative view of the birth and early education of Henry and William.

HENRY'S birth was a source of gratification to the hopes of his parents; announcing, as they thought, what his life so fully verified, that Spain, whose usurpation they had felt, should find in him an avenger of their wrongs. His mother, who succeeded her father in the kingdom of Navarre, was a woman of singular policy, ability, and resolution. She sang at the moment of his birth, and had the satisfaction to observe that he exhibited no symptom of a puny constitution. The hardy treatment of his childhood, was a prelude to an education with which delicacy had nothing to do. He was accustomed to such exercise as at once familiarized him to toil and peril, and prepared his mind to sustain with spirit, those vicissitudes, which diversified his life. In the mean time, such governors were assigned him, as, from their distinguished abilities, were fully capable of directing the education of a youth, who, with royalty, was to inherit the extensive demesnes of his fathers. Under the care of those, he be-

came



came heroic before he knew what it was to be great, and appeared to be a man, ere he had ceased to be a boy——On the other hand, William came into the world with every seeming disadvantage, and struggled through it under the pressure of perpetual inconveniencies. He was a posthumous child. His birth being premature, a delicacy of constitution, and weakness of frame, were among the number of his misfortunes. He may be said to have been persecuted before he saw the light. His fortune was incumbered. His public interests were opposed by a formidable party, headed by De Wit,\* to which his father's rash designs, conceived in the pride and wantonness of youth, against the liberties of the states, had given birth. The honours which had been decreed hereditary to his family, had been done away by a vote; and thus, his countrymen, in a fit of zeal for freedom, sacrificed his interests, whom Providence intended should become her guardian and her glory! Nor did his public distresses end here. That tyrannical assertor of popular liberty, Cromwel, caused the states, by a formal decree, to annul the rights of the house of Orange to the of-

\* Pensionary of Holland.

fice of stadtholder. This was intended as a final blow to the future consequence of the prince; and, as if to encrease its efficacy, the principality of Orange was, shortly afterwards, wrested from him, by a violent and ambitious neighbour, the king of France. In the mean time, the delicacy of his constitution, and the narrow abilities of his tutor, who was alike deficient in a knowledge of literature and the world, forbad those acquisitions from study and exercise, which, in the ordinary course of life, are necessary towards enriching a healthful body with a sound mind. However, Nature, who often works her wonders where they are least expected, chose him an unpromising repository for an inestimable pearl! Happy, perhaps, for his fame, that such inauspicious circumstances followed his birth! What glory might he not have lost, but for the difficulties he had to surmount! what veneration, but for the trials he had to sustain!

Of their youthful circumstances, their temper, the situation under which they engaged in the public ser-

As, from this view, it appears that Henry was more fortunate in the circumstances of his birth and early education than William, it will be also found, that he enjoyed much greater advantages in his youth. He caught a flame from history, and panted



ed for an opportunity of emulating those warlike characters of which he had read. His wishes were soon gratified; for Lewis the first, prince of Conde, lately the head of the hugonot party, having been killed at the battle of Jarnac, he, nominally, became their general.\* His early talents for war, and his impatience to acquire glory, were objects of astonishment at the battle of Moncontour. 'Twas there the soul of the hero shone forth from the boy; for, though but in his sixteenth year, such was his ardour to partake in the conflict, that with difficulty he was restrained within the bounds of prudence. He was the first that discovered an error in the conduct of the generals. "We have lost our advantage," cried he, and the battle of course.† Such early spirit and understanding promised wonders. Nor did they disappoint expectation. They shone with strengthened lustre at the battle of Coutras. A battle which may be considered as the foundation of his future good fortune,‡ and was so much the more

vice, and  
their milita-  
ry character

\* On the recommendation of Coligny, the admiral of France, who retained the power, and to whom he was indebted for the principles of the military art.

† Prefixe.

‡ Davila.

to his glory, as, through the course of their many wars, it was the first the hugonots had gained.\* But, if we would see his valour, his conduct and humanity in their zenith, we must look onward to the plains of Ivry; where, principally depending on the support of a gallant nobility, who fought for no other reward but glory, he obtained a victory, which evinces, in the most remarkable manner, how much courage and conduct are superior to numbers. The plan of the battle was truly judicious; the valour with which it was fought, superior, if possible, to the plan; and the clemency which distinguished it, more glorious than all! In a word, he entered on the business of the day like a christian,† and established that reputation for valour and skill, which his youthful experience, and abilities, had so often promised.—We have already observed that Henry had many, and they were great advantages, on his entrance into the busy world, which were never par-

\* What an unhappy people were they? Sincere in a cause which they were never to establish, they became the dupes of aspiring men, who, under the pretence of maintaining a religious, prosecuted, in fact, a political war. — The Hugonots bled for the convenience of their leaders!

† With a noble and pathetic prayer.

ticipated,



anticipated, by William, who, indeed, had not only an insufficiency in his early education, but the illiberal endeavours of De Wit to depress the rising ardour of his genius, to complain of. However, under the auspices of the princess his mother, the former was, in some degree, recompensed, by his acquisition of the European languages, and of those parts of mathematical knowledge, which immediately relate to the military art ; and, the latter soon blazed forth in a passionate desire to emulate the deeds of his illustrious ancestors. Yet, still, insurmountable obstacles appeared against his advancement. He had no Coligny to introduce him into life. De Wit's party continued implacable ; and the states perpetualized the edict for the suppression of the office of stadtholder. At length, the distresses of his country gave him an opportunity of emerging from retirement, and of shining at once in his native lustre. Lewis, the modern Alexander, whose pride was conquest, having concerted with Charles of England, the destruction of the protestant religion in Europe, determined upon making Holland, its great support on the continent, the first sacrifice. Wherefore, putting himself at the head of a formidable army, and attended by generals

nerals of the most respectable character, he carried his arms into the heart of that country ; where, with scarce any of the troubles of war, he effected all its purposes. He possessed himself of three provinces in one campaign. Resistance scarce stretched an arm against him ; nor was it to be wondered at, since, the states, anxious, by every method, to prevent the future power of the prince of Orange, had, before the commencement of the war, enervated their internal strength, by disbanding their veteran troops, and experienced officers, whom they thought attached to his interest, and madly confided in young and unskilful men to command their garrisons ; which, although numerous, shuddered at the sight of a disciplined army. Lewis, all this while, may be considered rather as a visitor than a foe in their country, since, wherever he came, the gates of the towns flew open for his reception. In a paroxysm of despair, the Hollanders revolt against their magistrates, and compel them to appoint the prince, in whom their last hopes were placed, to the office of captain and admiral general of the states. This promotion was soon followed by a suppression of the perpetual edict, and his investiture into the office of stadtholder. And now, being equally powerful in every department



department of the state, he exhorted the citizens to a steady defence of their liberties ; assured them, the other powers of Europe would not tamely behold the progress of the French arms ; and, having declared his resolution, to set his country free, or to die in her last entrenchment, flew to the army, where, at his first appearance, he signalized himself by opposing the whole power of France, commanded by the king in person ; who, having attempted to force his post, was compelled to retire with considerable loss. The Dutch seemed to acquire new life from this moment. They repulsed the French at Ardemburg ; and compelled the bishop of Munster, with an army of near thirty thousand men, to raise the siege of Groningen with prodigious loss. These successes on the part of Holland, sufficiently evinced to Lewis, the importance of the prince of Orange. Wherefore, to bring him over to his interest, he repeated an offer,\* the most flattering of all others to human nature, and which, perhaps, the youthful William only could have resisted. But sovereignty had no charms for a mind, which aspired to the superior dignity of ruling the hearts of a peo-

\* Littleton, Temple, Harris.

ple. He rejected the insidious bait, with all the contempt of true ancient heroism, observing, that his country's confidence was a trust he could never betray; that he stood up to defend her liberties, which no consideration should tempt him to barter. A narrow soul would have seized such an opportunity of revenge. But William, influenced by a nobler principle, seemed determined to convince his countrymen, that, remembering only generous actions, he would endeavour to secure peace and habitations to those who had endeavoured to deprive him of a home.\* Virtue has a charm even for the mean and the vicious. It fared with him accordingly; and those who had striven to crush him as a serpent, considered him, now, as the phoenix of the age. But the resolution he shewed upon this occasion, served only to excite the fury of war. Lewis, convinced that his constancy was immovable, determined on the total ruin of Holland. However, the activity of the prince soon assured him, that it was easier to determine than to perform. William, in

\* De Wit was the person sent by the states to inform him of their expectations, that he would quit their house at the Hague. A message the more mortifying, as being delivered by a foe, and as the house had been ceded, for the use of the family of Orange, many years.



the depth of winter, penetrated into the enemy's country; hunted an old general from post to post; and returned with abundance of prisoners, and the booty of two fortified places.\* But it was reserved for the next spring to establish his reputation for arms. When, in spite of a formidable army commanded by Lewis in person, assisted by viscount Turenne; and of the forces which were led by the prince of Condé, and the duke of Luxemburg, as well as of the meditated descent of the English, he took Naerden, Rhinden, Bonn, Brevel, and Lechnic, almost under the eyes of those great generals; and had the glory of seeing the monarch, who indulged the unmanly desire of subjugating Europe, reduced to the dishonourable necessity of abandoning all his conquests in Holland, Maestricht and Grave excepted. Encouraged by these successes, and probably with a view of opening a way for his arms into France, there to avenge the injuries of his country, William sought an opportunity of coming to a pitched battle with the renowned prince of Condé. It was a thought worthy the Epaminondas of Holland! and an opportunity of putting it into execution soon

\* Harris.

offered. The scene was at Seneffe, and the battle continued with unremitting fury, for more than ten hours. Condé, Luxemburg, and Noailles, names in themselves formidable, commanded against the confederates. All their skill, all their valour was displayed ; nor were those who fought under the banners of liberty, less eager for the honours of the day ! Indeed, they must have been insensible of glory, if they had not been fired by the example of their leader. William moved upon wings ! he was every where and at once ! saw every thing, ordered every thing ! he recalled the fugitive, encouraged the weak, and, as if conscious of security in the justice of his cause, looked upon danger with contempt, and often snatched his laurels from the hand of death ! Night, rather than necessity parted the combatants. The allies, however, kept the field ; on which \* twelve thousand breathless bodies appeared as a sacrifice to the phrenzy of ambition. But it was a day of glory to William, who established his reputation even on the lips of his foes ! Nothing was now wanting to perfect the success of the campaign, and reduce the French to an earnest desire of peace, but to liberate his

\* Sir William Temple says " six or seven thousand fell on each side."



country from the only remaining token of its servitude. For this purpose he appeared before Grave, where his conduct and spirit so much invigorated his soldiery, that they soon effected the reduction of the place, for which they had, in vain, endeavoured, for more than a month. And now, overtures of peace were made on the part of France, whose views were to seduce Holland into a separate negociation. But the prince displayed all that magnanimity in the cabinet, which he had so often exhibited in the field. He remained immovably fixed to one object, the interest of his allies; nor could the uncertainty of success in another campaign; the inclination of the people, who had become impatient to see an end of the war; or even the strongest motives of self-interest, induce him to recede from this point. He was made to understand, that his patrimonial territories, in the possession of France, would be restored; but he nobly observed, that the recovery of these was not an object which should retard the peace; for, that he should be content to lose all, if, by doing so, he could acquire an additional good town for Spain, on the frontiers of Flanders. But France was unwilling to gratify his demands in favour of the Spaniard. The war was therefore

therefore prolonged, and another battle was to be fought. Luxemburg had blocked up Mons. He was so confident of the security of his situation, as to assert, that the prince could not force him with four times his number. The event, however, proved otherwise ; for, after a desperate engagement, which continued nine hours, the duke retired in confusion, under favour of the night ; leaving the field of battle, many of the wounded, a quantity of tents, baggage, and ammunition, as so many testimonies of victory to the prince. But he was not at liberty to pursue it ; the states, to his great disappointment, having, by their treaty at Nimeguen, put an end to a war, from which he obtained a reputation for bravery and skill, which, if it needed future encrease, was fully perfected by the glory of his taking Namure, to the astonishment of his enemies, and the admiration of Europe, when garrisoned by fifteen thousand men, under the command of that distinguished general, marshal Boufflers, and in sight of a French army, of near one hundred thousand men, headed by marshal de Villeroy, who dared not to give him battle\*.

\* Millot.



WHILE the display of such a benevolent spirit ennobles William in our esteem, our veneration for Henry as sensibly declines, upon considering that, from whatever motive he at first took up arms, he continued, at least from the death of his predecessor, Henry the third, to wield them for himself. Religion was now but a word, to be used as best suited his purpose ; for, from that moment, whatever his panegyrists may insinuate, there was only one end and aim for all his actions — the quiet possession of the throne of France.— How narrow are the views of human pride ! and how much more illustrious would have been the king of Navarre, amidst his native rocks and wilds in native honour, than seated upon a throne, to which he was to ascend by a hypocritical renunciation of his religion ?\* And, that it was hypocritical, there are many circumstances

Of the principles of their conduct, and their acquisition of the sovereignty of France and England.

\* It is as vain in Sully, as it is in those popish historians, who make a pride of Henry's conversion, to plead its sincerity. It is in vain he would impose upon us by confessing, that, although he had recommended it to him from political motives only, and that these motives originally induced the king to think seriously of the matter, yet, that he at last became satisfied, " that the catholic faith was the securest." And how did he become satisfied ? by the success of the popish clergy, in their " conferences and controversies," over the protestant church :

circumstances to evict, even credulity itself. The French historians, partial as they have been in relating this event, confess how much his sincerity was doubted by all ranks of people ; nor have even his panegyrists been able to find a better apology in

church : a circumstance, continues Sully, not to be wondered at, since these were the only arguments upon religion which the king had ever heard. This is the worst compliment the memoirist ever paid to his sovereign. But, attached as he was by every tie of affection to Henry, he found himself in the disagreeable predicament of disparaging either the head or the heart of his master. Wherefore he chose the former, as being the least injurious of the two. But the fact is not as he has represented it. Controversy, says Voltaire, had been as much the topic of conversation in Henry's party, as war or love. However, if indeed the protestant divines confessed an inferiority in the controversy, such a confession could have arisen only from a formal design to betray their faith by a determined perplexity, calculated to flatter " that religion which they already " considered as their king's." But, not to argue upon the implausibility of all this, it cannot be supposed that such dissimulation and fraud, could have escaped the quick-sighted Henry, if he sought only for the truth. The fact is, " he " consented to be instructed for form's sake alone ; for indeed he knew more of " the matter already, than the bishops with whom he conferred." But, although we cannot agree with the sprightly writer, from whom we just now quoted, that this conversion, made, as he confesses, for political reasons, and, we will add, attended with perjuries too, " secured the king's eternal welfare," yet, we well know, it answered his purposes, by silencing, in a great measure, the competitors for the crown. Shall we adduce other circumstances ? Shall we observe how unlikely it was, that he, who had been educated a protestant from his infancy, should, all at once, become a sincere professor of that religion, which had made him the object of its resentment for many years together ?



the whole compass of language, than may be conveyed by one word—Policy. This circumstance is no less injurious to the character of Henry, than the application of England was honourable to that of William. How consistent was it with the spirit and prudence of a brave people, in the day of their trouble, when their laws and liberties became the sport of a bigotted tyrant, to look for a friend and avenger in him, who had so nobly maintained the interests of freedom at home? William, however, was careful of meddling with a cause, which appeared likely to be productive of the most serious events. Success lay in futurity; and to attempt and not succeed, would be to sacrifice England and Holland at the threshold, without obtaining permission to enter the temple of liberty. But, when he found, from his own observations, as well as by the repeated demands of persons of the first consequence in the state, that it remained with him, by rescuing their religion and laws, to save a country from ruin, in which that of Europe would be inevitably involved, he determined no longer to remain an inactive spectator. He prepared for the relief of a distressed people, and became so entirely devoted to the glorious cause in which he had embarked, as to for-

get those numerous difficulties and dangers, that arose to impede his resolution, and would have been sufficient to chill any spirit that did not, like the sun, owe only to itself, an equal and unextinguishable vigor. He knew he had some friends whom he dare trust, but was sensible of numerous and irreconcilable foes. He knew the people, for whose relief he had arisen, were often fickle and obstinate; and that, by opposing James, he would have to cope with the whole power of France, strengthened by the popish party of the three kingdoms. Yet, still, he persisted; not we conceive, as some would intimate, to gratify ambitious longings for royalty.\* On the contrary, it seems evident, that he

\* He knew there were legal barriers between him and the crown; that an oath of allegiance operated; that the claims of the king, even in case of a defeat, would still exist—in a word, that all those obstacles against his ascending the throne, which law, allegiance, and power could create, subsisted. Besides, it should be remembered that, at first, far from coming to extremities with James, he gave him such advice, as, if observed, would at once have secured to him, his crown and his quiet. And so studious was William of avoiding any just cause of offence to the king, while there was any prospect of his reformation, that, so soon as he discovered Monmouth had determined to invade England, he, who, till that time, had given this romantic Youth an honourable asylum, made a tendre of his personal service to the king, and immediately sent to his assistance, such English and Scotch troops, as were in the service of Holland.



he acted upon a principle so far noble, that, if a crown was indeed the grand object of his contemplation, he wished to receive it in a manner becoming himself, and the nation that was to give it; not for the splendors which would accompany it, but for the means it would give him, at once of establishing British liberty, and of indulging that glorious ambition, which ever influenced the prince of Orange and the king, to maintain the independence of Europe against the tyranny of France.\*

Holland. To this circumstance may be added, that the course of a few years promised to the prince the quiet possession of what, as some suggest, he, now, ambitiously sought. He was, by his mother, a nephew of England; and, in right of his wife, heir apparent to the crown. Wherefore, without doing violence to reason, we think, it cannot be supposed that he engaged in the revolution, to gratify a meer lust of dominion.

\* He received it as the free gift of those, whose liberties and immunities he stood up to assert and secure; and who, circumstanced as they were, had a right to give it: but he received it under the stipulations of the declaratory act, which, while it circumscribed the regal prerogative, established to the people, a full possession of all those privileges, which they could reasonably desire. Did that indicate an insatiate lust of power?

Of their use  
of the regal  
power, and  
their abili-  
ties for go-  
vernment.

HAPPY had it been for the reputation of Henry, if he had acquired sovereignty by such means. He who so nobly employed the powers which were conferred with a crown, deserved them. Scarcely, by the success of his arms, or rather by the abjuration of protestantism and the absolution of the pope, had he established himself in full security upon the throne, and, by an advantageous treaty with \* Spain, reinstated the quiet of the nation, after a course of forty years war, which proved alike calamitous to the contending parties, when he directed his attention to the happy cares of peace, and the relief of those miseries which civil dissention never fails to produce. These were objects worthy his regard. But he wanted a minister whose spirit was equal to his own, and whose ability would fully co-operate with the benevolence of his wishes. Happily the nation afforded one, who was too intelligent and honest to escape hatred, and too noble to regard it. Sully was the man employed. He appeared at the head of the finances, in spite of those speculators, who had long preyed upon the vitals of the people, and dreaded his understanding as much as his worth.

\* Concluded at Vervins.



In consequence of this appointment, every branch of the revenue was methodized ; the receipt of the income was restored to the king ; the nation was relieved ; the treasury grew rich ; and, by the prudent œconomy which was observed in the application of the whole, not only an enormous national debt, was, in a short time, discharged, but a supply provided for carrying on many noble works of public ornament and utility ; and in a few years, such a saving made, as would have been sufficient for the maintenance of a war in Germany, had Henry lived to execute his designs against the aspiring house of Austria. This was a happy revolution in the management of the finances ; but the king was not to be contented with seeing the worst malady of the state removed. Wherefore, having reduced the army, he attended to the restoration of order through the country ; to the improvement of the marine, on which the existence of commerce so much depended ; and, to the encouragement of arts and trade. He issued edicts providing for domestic plenty, by limiting the exportation of corn ; and for domestic wealth, by subjecting all specie attempted to be taken out of the kingdom to confiscation. Chambers of justice were erected for the  
punishment

punishment of defalcation, and other public grievances; and many regulations established, propitious to tillage and to trade. Nor, in the variety of his cares, did he forget the interests of literature, and an attention to the affairs of Europe. Such a conduct, uniformly maintained, would have secured to him as great a political reputation as that he had established for military skill. But there are strange inconsistencies in this part of his character. He strove, by example, to discountenance luxury in dress, and yet he established manufactures of silk. He honoured the soldiery, but suppressed nobility acquired by arms. He was an œconomist in particulars, but squandered as much upon buildings, love, and at play, as would have supported an army.\* Besides, he exhibited instances of a pride too great to be advised, and of an obstinacy too strong to be corrected. Few great men have so often repented, yet repentance did not always prevent a repetition of his errors. His mercy sometimes degenerated into vice. He pardoned such treasons in Auvergne, as had brought Biron to the block; but Auvergne was the brother of his mistress; and he re-established the

\* 15000 foot, says Sully.



Jesuits, contrary to every system of sound policy, as well as to the justice of an arret, published by his own order, which had expelled them, as pests, from his kingdom. In vain Sully argued ; in vain he shewed, that, from the subjection in which they were held by the pope, it was to be expected they would endeavour to shake the foundation upon which government rested, by exciting dissensions between the two prevailing religions ; that, from their connection with Spain, they would labour for the destruction of France ; and that, if every other method failed, they would again have recourse to the dagger or the bowl. In vain he said all this ; in vain the parliament of Paris remonstrated. Henry was obstinate, and asked, “ which of his advisers “ would be answerable for his person ? ” Thus, villainy operated like merit, in behalf of the jesuits, and those whom the king suspected at a distance, he invited about himself ! But Henry was not superior to fear, when threatened with personal loss or danger. Hence his abjuration for the sake of a crown, his favour to the society of Ignatius, and those terrors he felt from the predictions of astrology !\* To

\* Mezeray says, that Henry dreaded going into a coach, from its being foretold to him that he should die in one.

these circumstances may be added that, although his suspicions could be easily awakened by designing men, so as even to affect the honour of the incorruptible Sully, yet, he was so credulous, as to be almost the continual dupe of promises and protestations. Besides; secrecy was by no means his political virtue; and this is the more extraordinary, as he often said, “he was beset with  
 “men who were continually laying snares for him,  
 “to penetrate into the bottom of his heart.\*” These were his defects; but they were much less numerous than the difficulties which royalty intailed upon

\* To instance the fact. When the grand scheme which had been formed by him and Sully, for reducing the power and overgrown influence of the house of Austria, by restoring an equilibrium to the states of Europe, was nearly ripe for execution; a scheme, which, of all others, went the closest to his heart, he suffered his mind to be so entirely engaged by the projects he had formed for carrying this design into execution, that, one day, in discoursing the matter before several persons who were by no means well affected to his interest, he declared, “he would give Spain and the house of Austria such a blow, as  
 “would prevent them for the future, from being considered as formidable foes  
 “to France,” and was actually on the point of betraying his secret, until Sully, by taking the liberty of pulling his cloak, stopped his imprudent career, and gave him an opportunity of extricating himself, by the practice of a little prudent dissimulation. That this incautious disposition of Henry was productive of many ill consequences cannot be denied; and, in the end, there seems some reason to believe, it whetted the knife of Ravillac.

him.



him. Yet, it may be comparatively said, that he renounced his cares when he became a king. Whereas William, from the era of majesty might have dated the commencement of his distrefs. He received the crown, but not the dominion of the empire. The obedience of Scotland was yet to be obtained, and Ireland to be conquered. Factions distracted England, and, at an early season, even many of those who had been singularly earnest in inviting the prince of Orange, exhibited tokens of disgust against the king. Men whose public conduct is regulated by motives of interest, will ever find cause of complaint; and many such were about his person; for, although he had given them a full proportion of the employments that were disposed of, yet, his inability to do more became a cause of dissatisfaction, nor did they fail to infuse their pernicious spirit into all their dependents. They continued, indeed, in office; but they continued only to distract and distrefs. Hence, they had frequent opportunities of giving treacherous advice as to the affairs of the nation; and, while they pretended zeal for the king's honour, and respect for his worth, endeavoured to render even his humanity

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odious.

odious.\* He saw, with concern, that the prevalence of religious animosity was a source of perpetual discord. He saw the danger as well as inutility of oaths, which, without being advantageous to the state, were offensive to the consciences of the people, and tended to exclude the meritorious from offices suitable to their worth. His great object, therefore, was to promote an union of the protestant sects, so that each possessing the like privileges, the whole might become unanimous in its endeavours for the public weal. His benevolent intention was opposed; but the ancient oaths of allegiance and supremacy were annulled, and an act of toleration was passed. This act did not include the papists; however, they experienced not less humanity in William, whose conduct ever evinced his utter abhorrence of religious persecution.† Yet, this protecting virtue has been called by the cold name of policy, even by those whose ancestors ex-

\* By slandering his moderation in religious affairs.

† See his reply to the house of Lords when they addressed him to order the French papists to quit the kingdom; and his observation to the Scotch commissioners upon that clause of the coronation oath, which proposed the "Rooting out of hereticks."



perienced the benignity of its influence ! Indeed, to him it was owing that the foundations were laid of what is as truly valuable in civil as in religious affairs. Previous to his time, an avowal of the rights of human nature was esteemed disgraceful or criminal; and, as power and opportunity were at hand, christian oppressed christian ! But he changed the fashion, by shewing that religious notions gave him no dislike to those, who opposed his sentiments ; and he fought, by every method in his power, to prevent profession from injuring profession. His humanity thus operated in favour of those whom he wished to call friends. It went further. He fought for an act of indemnity, with clauses of exception only against particular state criminals, as the likeliest cure for all the apprehensions of every individual : but he did not at first succeed.\* However, the mildness of his government operated so effectually upon the minds of the people, that they became relieved from their fears, and their attachment to the king encreased with their affection. This was but a suitable return for that generous attention he shewed to the interests of Englishmen. Scarce a session pas-

\* It was violently opposed by the whigs.

fed but exhibited fresh proofs of fuch a difpofition. For, notwithstanding the ingratitude he experienced; the parliamentary infults that were repeatedly offered to his government; the diffidence that was expreffed of his good intentions; and the unceasing clamours which faction excited amongft the venal and the vulgar, he continued fteady to the principle upon which he fet out, that of eftablifhing British liberty upon an immoveable foundation. A virtue nobly fuperior to mean refentments could only have excited him to perfevere in the work. And this is the more to his reputation, as his paffions were of the ftrongeft kind. But happily, his benevolence was ftonger than thofe; infomuch that when he could do good, he feemed no longer capable of remembering ingratitude! What a pity fuch a character fhould have to combat with the virulence of party! Yet, he often found his beft meafures retarded by the oppofition of thofe, who, while they complained of parliamentary corruption, which themfelves had occafioned, longed only to partake of the fpoil. Did the whigs prevail? the partiality of the king was the cry. Were the tories employed? the ingratitude of majefty became the topic; the friends of William and of England were forgotten; the



the nation would be undone, for its affairs were put into the hands of its foes!—Thus circumstanced, what could he do? He endeavoured to promote tranquillity by balancing those parties against each other;\* but, being convinced, at length, of the irreclaimable treachery of the tories, he determined, instead of trying them any more, to bring into his service such men only, as, he had reason to think, were faithful to him, and to the interests of his people. To these causes were the frequent changes of persons and parties in his reign to be ascribed, rather than to an unsteadiness of his temper, an inattention to his friends, or an inability to distinguish whom he should employ. That such insincerity as this, should make him liable to take ill impressions of persons is not to be wondered at, especially, as he had felt the treachery of servants, almost from his younger days. However, his suspicions were sometimes politically, as well as morally wrong. Nor was his obstinacy productive of less inconveniencies. Depending too much upon the rectitude of his intentions, he generally continued fixed to an opinion which he had conceived to be right. Yet he sa-

\* Burnet.

crificed his sentiments, upon many occasions, to the representative of the nation; and even, where he was unquestionably right, gave up his favourite object, a respectable army, submitting it, after the peace of Ryſwic, to be most impolitically reduced to seven thousand men, and consenting to part with his beloved Dutch troops, rather than hazard the greater evil of a diffension with his parliament. Prodigality too was sometimes his fault; he was lavish to his favourites, and upon buildings; but upon some occasions, as improperly frugal.\* Nor, to make himself as happy as he might have been, did he sufficiently accommodate his temper to the disposition of a people who were rather to be won by the forward affability of a libertine,† than by that cold and reserved worth which so well suited the phlegmatic genius of Holland. He was too constantly the sovereign, and seemed to forget that it might become a king, upon some occasions, to disappear in the companion. Such were the failings in his political and civil management, but these were as a drop in the ocean, compared to the blessings which arose from his government. Ecclesiastical promo-

\* Burnet.      † Charles the 2nd.



tion rewarded piety and learning; upright judges were placed in the courts; and naval and military merit was distinguished by honours and rewards.\* These circumstances speak the goodness of his heart; but, if we look to those securities he established for our civil and religious liberties, for our properties and persons, language will be found insufficient for his praise. To him we are indebted for the act, which, by excluding papists for ever from inheriting the crown of England, and by confirming the rights and liberties of the subject, as asserted in the declaration of the two houses of parliament on the thirteenth of February 1688, perfected the constitution, as far as the discontents of faction, and the foes of the revolution would then permit. To him we are indebted for the benefit of an act for regulating trials in cases of high treason, which, as it was long wanted to prevent the sacrifice of many an illustrious character, stands as an effectual barrier against ministerial vengeance and despotism. To him we are indebted for the act, which, among other provisions of the last importance to the peo-

\* Neglect of military merit was imputed to him as a crime; but we think the titles and emoluments conferred upon Schomberg, Ginkle, &c. sufficiently obviate the charge.

ple, established the succession of the crown in the illustrious house of Hanover. To him we are indebted for the full freedom of debating all subjects in parliament, and of avowing and defending our sentiments thereon. And, finally, to his indefatigable endeavours, Europe is indebted for her preservation from an absolute dependence on the will of France.

Of their  
art, man-  
ners, and  
language.

WILLIAM, as we have observed, wanted art to make himself a happier man. Whereas, Henry possessed that engaging manner and captivating address, which charm wherever they are known! He had eloquence almost at command, and of a noble sort. It was animated but unaffected; expressive but not diffuse.\* Yet he was so fond of a playful  
sort

\* There was an Attic elegance, united with a Spartan strength, in almost all he said or wrote. What could be more nervous than his speech at Rouen?

“ Already, says he, by the mercy of heaven, the council of faithful servants  
“ and the swords of an illustrious nobility, between whom and my princes  
“ I dare not distinguish, since the appellation of gentleman is our noblest title,  
“ I have delivered this kingdom from servitude and ruin. It is my wish to  
“ restore it to its former state and splendor, and that you should partake in  
“ this second glory, as you shared in the first. I have not called you together,  
“ as was the custom of my predecessors, to oblige you to a blind acquiescence  
“ with my will, but to take your advice with a determination to abide by it,  
“ and



sort of wit, that, we fear, he sometimes degenerated into a punster. Nor was his language free from a kind of ostentation, which, while it was praise to himself, disparaged others. A great man need not become his own panegyrist, since illustrious actions find a tongue to praise themselves. It seems as if William thought so. He exhibited none of those insinuating arts, for which Henry was so eminently distinguished. On the contrary, he was remarkable for a disgusting dryness and reserve; he spoke little, and shewed rather the strength of judgment, than the brilliancy of wit, or the novelty of invention. Indeed, as he was endued with a considera-

“ and to put myself under your protection. This is not always the humour  
 “ of kings, of conquerors, or of veterans; but the affection I bear my people  
 “ makes every thing possible and honourable to me.” Such was his studied eloquence; but it is not more to be admired than many of his common observations. What could be more generous than his saying to a former foe, the old duke of Mayenne, when he had heartily tired him in the chase, “ cousin,  
 “ this is the only harm I shall do you while I live?” What more humane than his words to two peasants, who had been condemned to death, for supplying Paris with provisions, (while its siege was carrying on) when, giving them life and money at once, he said—“ get you gone; Henry of Bearne is poor, if  
 “ he had more he would give it you?” And what more gallant, if after such observations we should mention gallantry, than his Epistle to Gabrielle d’Estrée from the field of battle, in which he said, “ If I die, my last thought will be  
 “ on God, my last but one on you?”

ble knowledge of languages,\* with a strong memory, and an ability that enabled him to be an “*exact observer of men and things*,” he might have been a distinguished speaker, had not his political caution proved unpropitious to eloquence, which abhors restraint. And, hence, he disgusted as frequently by saying too little, as others do by saying too much. However, his coldness and circumspection forsook him at times. On the field of battle he spoke with freedom and fire, and his public speeches, almost without exception, abound with good sense, manly argument, and a dignity of spirit and expression, equally exempt from vanity and reserve.

Of their  
morals.

WE wish it were not incumbent upon us to discuss some few particulars in the character of Henry. If we make a detail of his pleasurable pursuits, his resolution and morals must be exhibited in a contemptible point of view. He will no longer appear like himself. His dignity will be demeaned, his majesty eclipsed! With a mind sufficiently informed to regulate the passions, he was, nevertheless, their perpetual slave. Health and quiet were his

\* Burnet reckons seven.



constant offerings at the shrine of gratification; nor can it be determined into what depth of infamy he would have plunged, had not Sully interposed.\*

Indeed

\* Were there not authentic proofs of the fact, who could believe that he meditated a divorce from his first wife, with the view of gratifying the wishes of an adulteress (Gabrielle d'Estée) whose ambition aspired to his throne? But in his amours the fictions of Romance are realized. He was the Jupiter of France, who could lay aside the thunders of war, to follow a mistress, in the disguise of a peasant, through the camp of an enemy; (Vide note on Volt. Henr.) and, with no less glory, lead an army into a distant province, to enjoy her conversation. One would imagine that reflection, the arguments of Sully, and the melancholy circumstances which marked the death of her who had thus fascinated Henry, would have induced him to guard against connexions in future, which, from experience, he might conclude, would be as injurious to his repose, as they would be fatal to his honour. But he was scarcely certain of obtaining the great object of his wishes, a divorce from the princess Margaret; and his ministers at the court of Florence had scarcely entered upon a treaty of marriage, between him and Mary of Medicis, when he was smitten with the charms of Henrietta de Balzac, a girl of bewitching innocence and beauty, as Mezeray describes her. Availing herself of the instructions of her Parents, who sought to profit by a circumstance that seemed to give her the fairest hopes of a crown, she engaged the King so far, as to obtain his promise that he would marry her, if "within a year, she brought him a son." This promise was so much the greater stigma upon his reputation, as his honour was already engaged to Mary of Medicis, and as Henrietta was of a family, whose intrigues against the state, in which she herself had been concerned, had lately occasioned Sully to signify to them an order from the king to leave Paris. But Henry was to continue the dupe of love, if we are warranted in the application of the word, and, as if to perfect that character, he reduced this promise into writing. Sully read it in confusion, and returned it with silence. What an emphatic rebuke, could the king have felt as he ought! But it was often his misfortune, that he could trespass upon the laws of honour with impunity.

Indeed this minister was at once his guardian and his guide ; infomuch that it would not be difficult to prove, there was, in many of the king's best actions,

With less power he would have been a better man. He would have profited by the reproach he so lately felt ; nor, by urging the scandalous business farther, have obliged the minister to take the writing from his hand and tear it to pieces. But even this mortification served only to excite his choler. He wrote another promise with which he purchased enjoyment. However, his ministers, more zealous for his glory than himself, concluded immediately the articles of his marriage with Mary, and thus ended an affair, which, as some think, reproaches Henry's justice as much as his understanding. If he did not intend complying with the tenor of his promise to Henrietta, he was wicked ; if he did intend complying with it, he was weak, and furnished the world with ample proof of the contradictory passions of the man, who, one day, would hazard life to gain glory, that he might sacrifice it the next, at the footstool of a harlot ! We pass over the public love he made to the countess of Moret, and afterwards to the Demoiselles des Effards. (Mezr. Page 934) But partiality alone could tempt us to overlook his designs upon the daughter of the Constable Montmorency. No sooner had this cynosure of beauty appeared in a balet at court, in the character of Diana, than, " hit with Cupid's archery," Henry was overcome, and felt all those emotions which chastity never inspires. He flattered himself, but she continued inflexible. Yet, he thought he might overcome her obstinacy by raising her to the highest dignity at court, next that of the queen. Wherefore, he married her to Condé, first prince of his blood ; who, owing every thing to his bounty, subsisted upon the pensions allowed him. In vain were the entreaties, the remonstrances, the prayers of Sully opposed to this marriage. He knew the king's inclination, and foresaw that it would give birth to greater inconveniencies, than had arisen from any of his earlier connexions. His suspicions were soon found to be just ; for, a few months had only elapsed, when Henry's flame shone with such brilliancy as not to escape the eyes of the youthful prince ;  
who,



tions, so much of his spirit, that to record these, is to erect a monument to his memory. Wherefore, however numerous may be the wise and good things

who, being highly irritated, spoke so disrespectfully of the king, that, as a punishment for his rashness, his appointments were taken away. (Vide note on Sully V. 4. P. 365.) This treatment operated in a manner widely different from what was expected; for Condé becoming apprehensive that violence would be used, where such severity had been practised, retired from court, and, shortly afterwards, carried his wife to Brussels, preferring, with a greatness of mind, suitable to his education and birth, to throw himself upon the hospitality of a foreigner, rather than become an instrument at home in his own disgrace. His case was pitiable, his resolution heroic. It fully proved what majesty may live in the subject, what meanness in the king! Henry was disappointed: Ill-will arose from disappointment, and severity from ill-will. Resentment and desire operating with equal force, he became deaf to the advice of Sully, and rashly dispatched Praslin, a captain of his guards, to signify his intention to the arch-duke that Condé should be given up. It was thought a petty prince dared not oppose the omnipotent will of France; but nothing more could be obtained in reply to Henry's repeated demands, than that, as an esteem for the noble blood of the prince, induced the arch-duke to allow him a retreat, the laws of honour and hospitality would never permit that he should be given up. Nay, when an attempt was made to carry off the princess, and afterwards upon the person of the prince, the whole city of Brussels gallantly put itself under arms, in defence of its illustrious guests. Henry, in resentment of all this, which tended, as he said, to vilify his reputation, (for he thought like those persons who are the most tenacious of character when they have the least pretensions thereto) influenced the parliament to pass an arret against the prince, condemning him to undergo whatever punishment the king should think fit. Thus, what began in infamy ended in injustice; as much to the dishonour of the king, as it was reputable to the character and foresight of Sully, whose advice, if followed, would have prevented such indelible disgrace.

said

saïd and done by Henry, one of the best proofs he gave of his worth and understanding, was his support of a minister, who gloried to applaud, but feared not to rebuke him; who served the nation many years with an ability only to be surpassed by his zeal; and, in the end, may be saïd to have felt the wound, which too soon deprived the world of a king, whose character, which we have thus freely placed in an impartial light, though deservedly honoured on many accounts, is, notwithstanding, like many others of great note, a reproach to its pride! Happily we find it as impossible to discover any trait in William's character, to correspond with that which we have just now sketched, as it would be to choose a Sully from amongst his ministers. As the head of a family, he was regular and discreet; constant in his private prayers, and studious of the scriptures: he was an easy master, a steady friend, and a husband so truly affectionate, that he manifested the same tender regard to the Memory of his queen, which she had experienced in her life time. As the head of a nation, he was a model of decency and devotion, in the public exercises of religion; and he acted at all times, as if he were satisfied that, as worth constitutes the citizen, where vice prevails, the



the state nurtures her foes in her own bosom, and her grandeur, however it may dazzle for the present, is, like the rising of the sun, but a splendid symptom that it is soon to set. He encouraged morals by example as much as by law; co-operated with parliament in every effort to maintain the interests of virtue; discouraged the publication of impious books; and forbade such theatrical representations as tended to immorality. Two societies were established under his immediate protection, for the reformation of manners at home, and the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts; and liberal provision was made for those ecclesiastics who were employed to promote the good work—In a word—If his life, like an epitaph, tells to the world that he lived for others as much as for himself, his last moments afford the most comfortable instances of the happiness of the christian hero, whose resolution expires but with himself.

UPON the whole. It appears, that the early fortunes of Henry were not marked by those unpropitious, and seemingly irremediable circumstances, which loured upon the birth of William. For, although an ambitious neighbour had trespassed upon

Summary.

on

on his hereditary rights, enough still remained, to prevent his becoming disrespectable, either as to power or property. Whereas, the affairs of William wore a different aspect. He had, to all appearance, irrecoverably lost that consequence in his native country, which had distinguished his fathers, and might have enabled him, in future, to recover his patrimonial possessions from the usurpation of France; and consequently, to restore his family affairs, at least, to a respectable condition— Besides, Henry's early genius was encouraged and enlarged: William's depressed and confined— Henry was a hero from constitution and education: William was one in spite of both.— Henry, at an early age, was introduced into the world, by an able and experienced commander, under whose auspices he acquired an extensive knowledge of the military art: William, totally inexperienced, and without a friend to instruct him, was obliged, as the only method of saving his country, to put himself at the head of its troops— Henry, having connected himself with a strong party, acquired a reputation for arms, without any lasting advantage to himself or to his cause: William, at the head of troops, despicable in point of discipline, and weak as to the comparative



comparative number of his foes, became at once respectable, by checking an inundation of French power—Of Henry it may be truly said that, from the death of his predecessor, at least, he continued in arms to aggrandize himself; a throne was the object for which he contended; but, William, even in his youth, rejected sovereignty to preserve his honour. The freedom of a nation was the prize for which he fought, and he obtained it. He defended a people, who, forgetful that they owed their all to the heroes from whom he sprang, had been his zealous persecutors; and, as he well saw, employed him in the arduous office of their general, from motives of necessity alone. But, such generosity could not fail to animate with gratitude, even those who had not known it before. The people opened their hearts to him; they rewarded him with their confidence, and with those honours which had been won by his ancestors, and by himself. — Henry's spirit in battle has been universally applauded. William, we should think, exhibited tokens of the like spirit, which have been often censured. But, perhaps, the censure is not generally just. The circumstances under which he acted, being considered, it will probably appear, that the spirit thus reproached,

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reproached, so far from being the source of his losses and disappointments, was, in fact, not only necessary at times, but, frequently, the occasion of success to the cause which he had undertaken to defend. Let us remember the state of the Dutch troops when he put himself at their head. They were mean and enfeebled; the levies, with which they were augmented, were hasty and undistinguished; nor did his principal ally, the Spaniard, afford him much greater relief than is to be found in empty promises and assurances. Yet, under such circumstances of imbecility, he was obliged to resist the best forces, commanded by the ablest generals of France. What, then, could have inspired such troops, with sufficient steadiness and resolution, to secure the advantage at Seneffe? What could have effected at the siege of Grave, in a few days, more than had been done there in a month before? and what could have deprived Luxembourg of the laurel, at Mons, but the example of that valour which has been so much decried? Indeed, the number and discipline of his troops, and the skill of his officers considered, it was William's misfortune, almost at all times, to meet his enemy upon unequal terms. Even after he became king of England, although it  
seemed



seemed as if he had obtained great supplies, effectual support was widely different from such appearances. The supplies were sometimes insufficient; and sometimes, from the ruinous difficulty of raising money upon the public credit, too long delayed. Faction, upon such, as upon almost all other occasions, was his foe. Besides, the troops which his auxiliaries engaged to provide, were frequently the creatures of imagination, having no existence but in pompous lists. Yet, in spite of such great and numerous misfortunes, his affairs, when directed by himself, appeared, at least, always respectable; while, in other hands, they were lazily and unsuccessfully carried on. These facts being considered, we think, his disappointments in the field will not appear so much the effects of rashness or inability, as they have been commonly imagined. He fought in an animating cause. He made it his own, and fought accordingly. But, what valour, what skill can secure an unsuccessful commander from reproach? However, if he had never forced the praise of Condé or of Luxembourg; if he had not exhibited a dexterity of generalship at Seneffe or at Mons, the reduction of Namure would prove that, in military skill he rivalled, as in courage he at all times

equalled Henry.—Indeed, as king of Navarre or France, Henry had not, by any means, the advantage of numbers; but his troops were choice; he was followed by a nobility trained to arms, who fought their reward in glory, and by generals of distinguished eminence and worth. Such circumstances gave him frequent advantage over his enemies; but they never operated with greater success than on the plains of Ivry. Whereas, William had no such fortune to boast. Therefore, when Henry conquered, he but shared, while William, in the like situation, may be said to have engrossed the praise.—If no one became victory better than Henry, it was William's peculiar art to be magnanimous in defeat. They were, indeed, the heroes of their times; but the superior dignity of the cause in which William was engaged, stamps superior worth upon his actions.—In Henry we praise the warrior more than the man; in William we praise the man more than the warrior.—Henry's actions were frequently the offspring of private, William's always the consequences of public consideration.—In Henry we admire the unabating fortitude, by which, in spite of so many perils and difficulties, he obtained his crown; but, in the latter, we venerate the disinterested.



terested philanthropy of a heart, too ample to be confined to a family, a sect, or a nation! a heart, justly esteemed the asylum of freedom and mankind! whose benevolence, being sufficiently strong to instigate the hero, at the hazard of almost all that was dear, to the defence of an oppressed and injured people, with whom he was not immediately connected, was rewarded with a crown—Henry's was an inconsistent, William's a consistent character—Henry renounced the religion which he had long defended, from motives of policy; William continued the champion of the protestant faith from principle alone—If Henry recovered France from the miseries of civil war, William restored and strengthened the British constitution—Henry shewed a noble inclination to befriend a grateful people, and he possessed the means of accomplishing his wishes. He was constantly fortunate in the service of a minister, as able as he was upright; and, upon becoming king of France, he became the tongue that spoke the law, and the hand that held the purse of the nation: Whereas, William had no Sully to watch, to think, and to toil for his glory; he was generally restricted and opposed, even in his best designs; yet, as far as his means and ability could

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could perform, he was a faithful and generous king, to a discontented and ungrateful people—We do not impute to Henry, that the advantages of his government died almost with himself: But it is the glory of William, that as the effects of his reign were safety and happiness to his subjects, they have remained the pride, the consequence, and the comfort of their descendants; and must continue such, while the protestant religion has an interest in the world—It seems that Henry was well acquainted with the interests of his own kingdom, and also with those of foreign courts; but a want of caution and reserve, an unsteadiness of disposition, and even a timidity at times, considerably derogated from his political character: Whereas, William was deep and thoughtful. He was, what Henry endeavoured to be, the politician of Europe; his toils supported, his counsels directed, his genius animated that wise and illustrious confederacy, which defeated the arbitrary schemes of France. He was cautious to an extreme, and, like Henry, suspicious, sometimes, where confidence would have been a virtue. But apologies may be found, to plead in mitigation of those errors, as well as for his having taken into employment



employment men who were alike suspected by himself and the nation, which will not operate in favour of a king who had experienced more fidelity in his servants, and was not, from the overbearing influence of faction, under any necessity of employing the worthless—Henry, in the general, cannot be too much applauded for his public, or too much censured for his private life: William was as uniformly amiable in a domestic as he was in a public station—Henry had strong passions which ruled him; William had strong passions which he ruled—Henry's art and eloquence could almost recommend his faults; William wanted art to make even his virtues captivating—Henry was frequently immoral; William was a just and persevering moralist—Henry's criminal enjoyments acquired an additional degree of inveteracy, from their being the most conspicuous example of that profligate love of pleasure, to which honour and religion are too frequently sacrificed: But, William finished an illustrious character, by continuing to act as a model of conjugal fidelity, domestic worth, inflexible integrity, and true religion. In a word, he surmounted more numerous distresses than Henry had to oppose: His errors and mis-

mismanagements were fewer and less criminal; and his actions were universally as great, and frequently sprang from nobler principles. Wherefore, to sum up all at once, he may justly be considered as another Henry without his vices, and consequently a better man, a better christian, and a better king.

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